

## The Subtle Art of Not Giving Fuck

1. “And while there’s nothing wrong with good business, the problem is that giving too many fucks is bad for your mental health.”
2. “The desire for more positive experience is itself a negative experience. And, paradoxically, the acceptance of one’s negative experience is itself a positive experience.”
  - *NOTE — Alan Watts, “the backwards law” — How can the “Backwards Law” be applied to other aspects of our work and relationships?*
3. “What’s interesting about the backwards law is that it’s called “backwards” for a reason: not a fuck works in reverse.”
  - “Suffering through your fears and anxieties is what allows you to build courage and perseverance.”
  - “Everything worthwhile in life is won through surmounting the associated negative experience.”
  - *NOTE — I keep coming back to this idea that “the only way out is through.” Very similar to Ryan Holiday’s The Obstacle is the Way. Reread that book...*
4. “If you’re able to not give a fuck about the pain, you become unstoppable.”
5. “Not giving a fuck does not mean being indifferent; it means being comfortable with being different.”

6. “When we say, ‘Damn, watch out, Mark Manson just don’t give a fuck,’ we don’t mean that Mark Manson doesn’t care about anything; on the contrary, we mean that Mark Manson doesn’t care about adversity in the face of his goals, he doesn’t care about pissing some people off to do what he feels is right or important or noble.”

- *NOTE -It’s “cool to care” but what you care about matters. Caring about everything and everyone is NOT the answer.*

7. “Because here’s another sneaky little truth about life. You can’t be an important and life-changing presence for some people without also being a joke and an embarrassment to others.”

8. “To not give a fuck about adversity, you must first give a fuck about something more important than adversity.”

- *NOTE — Humility. Humility. Humility.*

9. “I once heard an artist say that when a person no problems, the mind automatically finds a way to invent some.”

10. “Whether you realize it or not, you are always choosing what to give a fuck about.”

- *NOTE — Be intentional with the things we choose to care about. Allowing others to dictate what you care about what you don’t is the path to giving TOO MANY fucks.*

11. “That pain and loss are inevitable and we should let go of trying to resist them.”

12. “The secret sauce is in the solving of the problems, not in not having problems in the first place.”

13. “In other words, negative emotions are a call-to-action. When you feel them, it’s because you’re supposed to do something.”

- *NOTE — This makes sense, but how do we keep the emotional side of brain, that wants to avoid pain and negativity, from pushing us to the easier path?*

14. “A more interesting question, a question that most people never consider, is, “**What pain do you want in your life?** What are you willing to struggle for? Because that seems to be a greater determinant of how our lives turn out.”

15. “The path to happiness is a path full of shit-heaps and shame.”

16. “See: it’s a never-ending upward spiral. And if you think at any point you’re allowed to stop climbing, I’m afraid you’re missing the point. Because the joy is in the climb itself.”

17. “It doesn’t mean you aren’t legitimately a victim in some circumstances. It just means that you’re not special. Often, it’s this realization — that you and your problems are actually not privileged in their severity or pain — that is the first and most important step toward solving them.”

- *NOTE — All we can ask for is to be exceptional at one thing.*

18. “The vast majority of life is unextraordinary, indeed quite average.”

19. “In fact, the tendency toward entitlement is apparent across all of society. And I believe it’s linked to mass-media-driven exceptionalism.”

- *NOTE — You only get to be exceptional at one thing, what’s it going to be?*

20. “The rare people who do become truly exceptional at something do so not because they believe they’re exceptional. On the contrary, they become amazing because they’re obsessed with improvement. And that obsession with improvement stems from an unerring belief that they are, in fact, not that great at all. It’s anti-entitlement.”

21. “You will have a growing appreciation for life’s basic experiences: the pleasures of simple friendship, creating something, helping a person in need, reading a good book, laughing with someone you care about. Sound boring, doesn’t it? That’s because these things are ordinary. But maybe they’re ordinary for a reason: because they are what actually matters.”

- *NOTE — Be OK with ordinary. Find peace in ordinary.*

22. “If suffering is inevitable, if our problems in life are unavoidable, then the question we should be asking is not “How do I stop suffering? But “ Why am I suffering — for what purpose?”

23. “But there’s another, even deeper level of the self-awareness onion. And that one is full of fucking tears. The third level is our personal values: Why do I consider this to be success/failure? How am I choosing to measure myself? By what standard am I judging myself and everyone around me?”

24. “...decisions were based on chasing highs, not generating true happiness.”

25. “...the question is by what standard do we measure ourselves?”

- *NOTE — This has always been a moving a target and to be honest, the target has at times not been healthy or true to self. Work needs to be done here.*

26. “The fact is, people who base their self-worth on being right about everything to prevent themselves from learning from their mistakes. They lack the ability to take on new perspectives and empathize with others.”

- *NOTE — Embrace ignorance*

27. “While there is something to be said for “staying on the sunny side of life,” the truth is, sometimes life sucks, and the healthiest thing you can do is admit it.”

28. “To deny that negativity is to perpetuate problems rather than solve them.”

- *NOTE — It’s OK to feel like shit. It’s NOT ok to NOT act towards removing that feeling from your life.*

29. “As Freud once said, “One day, in retrospect, the years of struggle will strike you as the most beautiful.”
30. “This, in a nutshell, is what ‘self-improvement’ is really about: prioritizing better values, choosing better things to give a fuck about. Because when you give better fucks, you get better problems. And when you get better problems, you get a better life.”
31. “The more we choose to accept responsibility in our lives, the more power we will exercise over our lives. Accepting responsibility for our problems is thus the first step to solving them.”
32. “Fault is past tense. Responsibility is present tense. Fault results from choices that have already been made. Responsibility results from the choices you’re currently making, every second of every day.”
- *NOTE — Stop making excuses for the things you say (and the way you say them).*
33. “Every step of the way I was wrong. About everything. Throughout my life, I’ve been flat-out wrong about myself, others, society, culture, the world, the universe — everything. And I hope that will continue to be the case for the rest of my life. Just as Present Mark can look back on Pask Mark’s every flaw and mistake, on day Future Mark will back on Present Mark’s assumptions (including the contents of this book) and notice similar flaws. And that will be a good thing. Because that will mean I have grown.”
34. “Growth is an endlessly iterative process.”

- *NOTE — Maybe I'm wrong for hating all the "It's the journey not the destination," porn that exists in the world.*

35. "Certainty is the enemy of growth. Nothing is for certain until it has already happened — and even then, it's still debatable. That's why accepting the inevitable imperfections of our values is necessary for any growth to take place."

36. "Most of our beliefs are wrong. Or, to be more exact, all beliefs are wrong — some are just less wrong than others."

37. "But perhaps the answer is to trust yourself less. After all, if our hearts and minds are so unreliable, maybe we should be questioning our own intentions and motivations more."

38. "The fact that she does everything 'right' doesn't make her right."

39. "It's the backwards law again; the more you try to be certain about something, the more you try to be certain about something, the more uncertain and insecure you will feel. But the converse is true as well: the more you embrace being uncertain and not knowing, the more comfortable you will feel in knowing what you don't know."

- *NOTE — Try living in a constant state of uncertainty guided by the pursuit, not the solution (which now that I about it is essentially journey not destination porn again).*

40. "Uncertainty is the root of all progress and all growth."

41. “This openness to being wrong must exist for any real change or growth to take place.”

42. “Parkinson’s Law: Work expands so as to fill up the time available for its completion.”

43. “Murphy’s Law: Whatever can go wrong will go wrong.”

44. “Manson’s Law of Avoidance: The more something threatens your identity, the more you will avoid it.”

- *NOTE — Look deeper into all three of these laws. There has to be more to learn than the same surface bullshit everyone references.*

45. “I say don’t find yourself. I say never know who you are.”

46. “Instead, measure yourself by more mundane identities: a student, a partner, a friend, a creator.”

47. Three Questions to be Less Certain of Yourself

- What if I’m wrong?
- What would it mean if I were wrong?

48. “Aristotle wrote, “It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.” Being able to look at and evaluate different values without necessarily adopting them is perhaps the central skill required in changing one’s own life in a meaningful way.”

49. Would being wrong create a better or a worse problem than my current problem, for both myself and others?



50. “Dabrowski argued that fear and anxiety and sadness are not necessarily always undesirable or unhelpful states of mind.”

51. “Our most radical changes in perspective often happen at the tail end of our worst moments.”

52. “Pain is part of the process.”

53. “Learn to sustain the pain you’ve chosen. When you choose a new value, you are choosing to introduce a new form of pain into your life. Relish it. Savor it. Welcome it with open arms. Then act despite it.”

54. “Action isn’t just the effect of motivation; it’s also the cause of it.”

- *NOTE — This is truth. In my deepest, darkest periods of creative block and subsequent self-pity that accompanies*

55. *“The Block,” action was the only way out.*

56. “If we follow the ‘do something’ principle, failure feels unimportant. When the standard of success becomes merely acting — when any result is regarded as progress and important, when inspiration is seen as a reward rather than a prerequisite — we propel ourselves ahead. We feel free to fail, and that failure moves us forward.”

57. “Ultimately, the only way to achieve meaning and a sense of importance in one’s life is through a rejection of alternatives, a narrowing of freedom, a choice of commitment to one place, one belief, or (gulp) one person.”

58. “Russian society found the valuable currency to be trust. And to build trust you have to be honest. That means when things suck, you say so openly and without apology.”

- *NOTE — I wonder how much trust there is to this outside of Manson’s personal experience.*

59. “The point is this: we all must give a fuck about something, in order to value something. And to value something, we must reject what is not that something. To value X, we must reject non-X.”

60. “Entitled people, because they feel as though they deserve to feel great all the time, avoid rejecting anything because doing so might make them or someone else feel bad.”

61. “The victim, if he really loved the save, would say, ‘Look, this is my problem; you don’t have to it for me. Just support me while I fix it myself.’”

62. “People with strong boundaries are not afraid of a temper tantrum, an argument, or getting hurt. People with weak boundaries are terrified of those things and will constantly mold their own behavior to fit the highs and lows of their relational emotional roller coaster.”

63. “It’s not about giving a fuck about everything your partner gives a fuck about; it’s about giving a fuck about your partner regardless of the fucks he or she gives. That’s unconditional love, baby.”

64. “Conflict is not only normal, then; it’s absolutely necessary for the maintenance of a healthy relationship.”

65. “Trust is the most important ingredient in any relationship, for the simple reason that without trust, the relationship doesn’t actually mean anything.”

66. “Unfortunately, building a track record for trust takes time — certainly a lot more time than it takes to break trust.”

○ *NOTE — Learn more about the intricacies of the Paradox of Choice*

67. “I’ve found increased opportunity and upside in rejecting alternatives and distractions in favor of what I’ve chosen to let truly matter to me.”

68. “Because we’re able to conceptualize alternate versions of reality, we are also the only animal capable of imaging a reality without ourselves in it. The realization causes what Becker calls ‘death terrors’ a deep existential anxiety that underlies everything we think or do.”